

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF ALABAMA

Standing Order No. 2:00-mc-03046

ORDER
PHOTOGRAPHY, BROADCASTING, RECORDING,
AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES¹

PROHIBITORY RULE: Photography and audio or video recording by any means inside of any federal courthouse in the Middle District of Alabama (Montgomery, Opelika, and Dothan), including radio, television, or other broadcasting during the progress or in connection with judicial proceedings, whether or not court is in session, is prohibited. The policy includes (1) any courtroom, (2) any portion of the federal courthouse lobby, (3) any portion of the courthouse corridors, (4) any rooms used for jury assembly or selection, and (5) the courthouse security screening checkpoints.

DISCRETION TO ALTER: Where the interests of justice or public safety may so require, the Court may direct the United States Marshal Service to extend the application of this policy to the curb or edge of the public streets or thoroughfares adjacent to such buildings if such areas are owned by the United States Government. In exceptional situations, at the request of the Chief Judge of the Middle District of Alabama, the United States Marshal Service, or United States Attorney, further limitations on photography, audio and video recording, and broadcasting may be made to maintain the secrecy of grand jury proceedings, to protect jurors and witnesses, and to further the interests of justice in unusual, hazardous, or inflammatory circumstances. Exceptions to this prohibitory rule may be made on a case-by-case basis, but only with the prior express permission of the Chief Judge of the Middle District of Alabama or United States Marshal for good cause.

EXCEPTIONS: The foregoing notwithstanding, the following exceptions apply: (1) Photography, broadcasting and audio and video recording will be permitted by the media and press in certain pre-designated areas on the courthouse grounds, designed as the "media area," subject to limitations posed for the secrecy of grand jury proceedings, to protect jurors and witnesses, and to further the interests of justice; (2) Attorneys and members of their staff may possess and use electronic or photographic devices for the presentation of evidence; (3) The broadcasting, televising, recording, or photographing of investitive, ceremonial, or naturalization proceedings may be authorized by the presiding judge; (4) Cellular telephones, smart devices, and laptop computers may be possessed in the courtroom and its environs by members of the court family, attorneys, attorneys' staff, law enforcement personnel, and the press; provided, however, that no photography or audio

¹ This Order supersedes the Court's Miscellaneous Order filed on October 6, 2009, relating to photography, broadcasting, recording, and electronic devices, which is hereby VACATED.

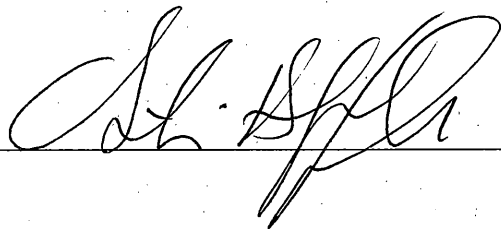
or video recording is conducted in the courtroom and its environs. Such devices may be used outside the courtroom and within its environs for communication and access to information only.

PURPOSE: It is the purpose of this order to preserve and protect the dignity and solemnity of court proceedings, to promote public safety and the safety of the court and its personnel, and to facilitate access to court functions by the public and court officers while allowing the progressive use of electronic devices which will aid in the preparation and trial of cases and the hearing and resolution of motions and other court matters. Nothing herein contained shall be construed unreasonably so as to restrict the constitutional rights of any individual. The environs of the courtroom as defined in this order shall not include the office of any elected official within any United States courthouse, nor should it include the office area of any other agency within such buildings where photography, broadcasting, and recording have been invited or authorized by the person in charge thereof with respect to a matter which is unrelated to court proceedings or security.

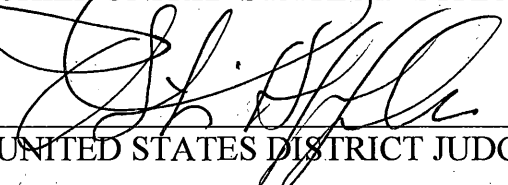
PENALTY: Persons subject to this order may be asked to cease all violations thereof, and if violations continue after notice to cease have been provided, such persons may be requested to immediately leave the premises, or if appropriate in the opinion of the United States Marshal or courthouse security, detained and brought before a judicial officer of the Middle District of Alabama for further relief including, but not limited to, contempt of court. Any violation of this policy may also result in the immediate confiscation of the device. Users of any device may be required to demonstrate that the devices perform their proper function.

This order shall remain in effect until further order of the court.

APPROVED BY
THE FACILITY SECURITY COMMITTEE:

 10/4/23

 10/4/2023
CHIEF UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

 10/4/23
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE